

Self-Service Center
PROCEDURES: WHAT TO DO WITH THE COURT
DOCUMENTS AFTER YOU HAVE FILLED THEM OUT

STEP 1: Make copies of the following documents after you have filled them out:

| DOCUMENT | NUMBER OF COPIES |
|--|------------------|
| ▪ <i>"Petition to Enforce a Child Custody Determination"</i> | 3 |
| ▪ <i>"Order for Appearance of Person(s) With Physical Custody of the Child(ren)"</i> | 3 |

STEP 2: Separate your documents into four (4) sets:

SET 1 - ORIGINALS:

- *"Family Court Cover Sheet"* (only required if new case number)
- *"Petition to Enforce Child Custody Determination"*
- *"Order for Appearance of Person(s) With Physical Custody of the Child(ren)"*

SET 2 - YOUR COPIES:

- *"Petition to Enforce Child Custody Determination"*
- *"Order for Appearance of Person(s) With Physical Custody of the Child(ren)"*

SET 3 - COPIES FOR THE OTHER PARTY:

- *"Petition to Enforce Child Custody Determination"*
- *"Order for Appearance of Person(s) With Physical Custody of the Child(ren)"*

SET 4 - COPY FOR THE JUDGE:

- *"Petition to Enforce Child Custody Determination"*

STEP 3: File the papers at the Court:

GO TO:

GO TO THE SUPERIOR COURT TO FILE YOUR PAPERS: The court is open from 8am-5pm, Monday-Friday. **You should go to the court at least two hours before it closes.** You may file your court papers at the following Superior Court locations:

The Clerk of the Superior Court
Central Court Building
201 West Jefferson, 1st floor
Phoenix, Arizona 85003

The Clerk of the Superior Court
Southeast Court Complex
222 East Javelina Drive, 1st floor
Mesa, Arizona 85210

The Clerk of the Superior Court
Northwest Court Complex
14264 West Tierra Buena Lane
Surprise, Arizona 85374

The Clerk of Superior Court
Northeast Regional Court Center
18380 North 40th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85032

FILE:

Go to the Clerk of the Court filing counter to file your documents.

FEES:

There are no filing fees or service fees for this procedure.

WHAT THE FILING CLERK WILL DO:

The Clerk will keep the original of the *"Petition to Enforce a Child Custody Determination"* to place in the permanent Court file. The Clerk will then court-stamp all the originals and copies you have, to show what documents were filed, and give them back to you.

STEP 4: Take the ***“Petition to Enforce a Child Custody Determination”*** and the other court papers given back to you by the Filing Clerk to the Judge’s office if your case is filed in Downtown Phoenix or Surprise, or take it to Family Court Administration if your case is filed in Mesa. If you are not sure which Judge is assigned to your case, call Family Court Administration at: 602-506-1561 in Downtown Phoenix, 602-506-2021 in Mesa, 623-372-9403 in Surprise, or 602-372-7700 for the Northeast Court Facility (at 40th Street & Union Hills, Phoenix).

If you filed your Petition in Downtown Phoenix or Surprise, you will be directed to a waiting area outside the Judge’s office. If you filed your Petition in Mesa, you will be told by Family Court Administration to take your papers to the floor where the Judge is located, where you will be met by the Judge’s staff. If you filed your Petition at the Northeast facility, you will be directed to use the intercom system to contact the Judge’s staff. You will be asked to wait until the Judge has the opportunity to grant or deny your Petition.

WARNING: If you have a custody order the Judge will often ask his or her staff to confirm that it is valid. This takes time. If you take your papers to the Judge late in the afternoon it is not always possible to confirm the validity of the custody order *until the next day*. You should try your very best to take your papers to the Judge as soon as possible *in the morning*.

What the Judge will do: The judge will look over the ***“Petition to Enforce a Child Custody Determination.”*** The Judge might want to:

- Sign the ***“Order for Appearance of Person(s) with Physical Custody of the Child(ren)”*** without seeing you,
- OR ask you to come into the office and explain the situation,
- OR have a formal court hearing.

The Judge will then decide one of the following:

- To sign the ***“Order for Appearance of Person(s) with Physical Custody of the Child(ren),”*** which will schedule a court hearing.
- OR reject your request and not sign the ***“Order for Appearance of Person(s) with Physical Custody of the Child(ren)”*** right then,
- OR to order whatever else the Judge thinks is proper. This includes orders against you if the Judge thinks you deliberately tried to do something improper by filing the ***“Petition to Enforce a Child Custody Determination.”***

If the Judge signs the ***“Order for Appearance of Person(s) with Physical Custody of the Child(ren)”***, the Judge or his or her staff will keep the original and the courtroom clerk will make a certified copy to give you.

STEP 5: Get a certified copy of the completed ***“Order for Appearance of Person(s) with Physical Custody of the Child(ren)”*** and a copy of your petition legally served on the other party. You can hire a private process server for this, or you can go to the Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office to have the documents served on the other party. If you go to the Sheriff’s Office, someone at that office will ask you to fill out a form, or ask you many questions about the other party and the child(ren), including what they look like, where they live, where they work, and so forth. They may also ask you for pictures of the other party and the child(ren) if you have them, and will conduct a criminal history check on all parties involved. For more information on your options for legally serving the other party with court papers, please see the Self-Service Center packet Number Two on “Service”.

STEP 6: **The Court Hearing.** Be sure to write down the date, time and place of the court hearing, and come to the hearing. Be on time. Dress neatly. Be prepared to show the Judge why you are entitled to the custody of the child. **Unless you have been ordered to bring your child(ren) to court, do not bring any child(ren) to Court.**